James Sime

Uncritical Criticism

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Prof. W. Robertson Smith's
Commission Speech

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A REVIEW OF

PROFESSOR W. ROBERTSON SMITH'S

COMMISSION SPEECH

BY

JAMES SIME, M.A., F.R.S.E.

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

My reason for venturing on the following criticism is, that any member of the Committee who feels himself aggrieved by the charges of 'ignorance,' 'gross unfairness,' and 'captiousness' freely flung out against the whole body of them, is entitled to repel these charges by all fair and honourable means. If they are true, so much the worse for the Committee.

Of the three versions of the Speech,—the spoken, the reported, and the revised,—I have used the last, as being the most favourable for the speaker, though not the fairest for the Committee.

I propose to discuss the points in dispute solely on their literary and historical merits. My hope also is, that I shall discuss them as a scholar should. And therefore I appeal for a fair hearing to sensible men on both sides, whose only object is the maintenance of truth and not the triumph of party.

The merits of the points in dispute seem to me of far more consequence than questions of procedure. I have therefore limited my criticism to about sixteen pages of the Speech (pp. 9–24). Every one is aware that the correction of an erroneous statement usually requires more space than is taken up in originally setting forth the error.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

As a second edition of this review has been called for, I take the opportunity of saying that nothing which has come to my knowledge renders it necessary for me to alter or modify aught which I have advanced.

By an extraordinary perversion of my object and meaning, Prof. W. R. Smith recently attempted to show that *one* of the three points involved in the proof at p. 13, 3 *a*, was unfounded. Instead of facing the argument that is there used, he put forward a totally different question, which I had from the first resolved not to look at, as it has not the slightest bearing on the point in dispute. And having thus perverted my meaning, he pretended to have disproved this *third* part of *one* argument, and therefore to have shown the worthlessness of all the proofs adduced in support of the conclusion that more than a score of other blunders and misrepresentations exist in his Speech. A generalization so sweeping, from a premiss so meagre, was supported by language at once unscholarly and absurd. And, besides, his assertion that a knowledge of Syriac was required to form a judgment on the irrelevant point raised by him was trifling; for men of ordinary education and intelligence can, without knowing a letter of that language, gather from Field's book, to which Mr. Smith referred, all that he has learned, and perhaps more.

REC. SEP 1881

UNCRITICAL CRITICISM.

THE SPEECH A MINE OF INACCURACY.

The wealth of inaccurate statement in Mr. Smith's Speech is so great that it would be wearisome to gather up the whole in one place. Some of it lies on the surface; much of it needs a little digging before it can be found; but there is none of it beyond the reach of a man gifted with common sense and with love for historical research. As the literary side of the Bible alone is understood to be considered in his Articles and Speech, there is no call here for dragging in the inspiration and infallibility of the Book to eke out imperfect argument. Looking at it as an ordinary work of ancient literature, placed on its trial in the house of its friends, we hold that it has not got fair-play from Mr. Smith and some of his admirers. There have been a roughness of handling and an unfairness of treatment on their part, which would have drawn down on them the ridicule of the world if they had attempted the like towards Chaucer or Shakespeare or Milton. Nor is it difficult to prove this, even from the Speech. A cursory reading will show that it is partly a learned defence of Mr. Smith's views, and partly a popular exposition of literary questions. Of really learned criticism, however, there is little, and even that little is scarcely worthy of the name. It is popularly put and can be popularly met. Of popular exposition there is more; perhaps to some men's thinking there is too much. Not a few would have preferred less of the modern Midrash or 'sermonizing treatment,' and more of definite scientific utterance. Vehemently to charge those who do not hold your views with ignorance, captiousness, prejudice, unfairness, and want of charity, as Mr. Smith does without proving it, is weakness; to prove the

fact is quite enough. Had these disagreeables fallen from Mr. Smith in the heat of a trying moment, they might have been overlooked; but when they are printed, almost three weeks later, after a revisal,[1] which ought to have convinced him that nearly everything he was saying was wrong, there is no help for it but to show where the ignorance really lies.

I. The Learned Criticism.

1. *The Chronicler and the Book of Ezra.*

(*a*) Inaccurate statement of the point in dispute.

According to the citations made in the Report, Mr. Smith charges the chronicler with ignorance of the Hebrew writings which he used in compiling his books. And that there may be no mistake about the nature of this ignorance, a special example is also quoted, Ezra iv. 6–23, in which 'oversight,' 'antedating,' and 'dislocating of events' are ascribed to the writer of Chronicles, by whom it is taken for granted that that part of Ezra was composed. The Report shows that Mr. Smith charges the Chronicler with what may be called thorough blundering. But how differently all this sounds in the Speech! Not a word is found there of oversight, or dislocating the order of events, or of anything approaching to blundering. It is not the sacred writer who has got any reason to speak of a wrong done to his good name;[2] it is Mr. Smith who has been wronged. On the passage from the Book of Ezra he says: 'So far as I remember, there is not a single recent writer, not even Keil, who does not hold the view that the things in Ezra iv. referred to in the passage quoted by the Committee, which seem at first sight to refer to the building of the temple, refer only to the building of the walls. There is a little disorder in the text. There is a little transposition of some of the sources, as there often is in manuscripts.' And after this travesty of the Committee's position, he wound up with a commonplace about the providence exercised in preserving the manuscripts so pure as they are.

[1] That the Speech was revised is shown both by the additions within brackets [ ] on page 20, and by other things.

[2] Must he not receive well-deserved censure for a careless handling of easily-understood documents, if Mr. Smith be right?

If the Committee had had nothing else to complain of than that Mr. Smith discovered a little disorder in the text, and a little transposition of some of the sources, he would have been justly entitled to denounce their conduct as captious and uncharitable. By an ordinary grammatical usage, any writer is at liberty to finish what he is speaking of, and then to go back on the narrative with the object of resuming a dropped thread of the action. This may sometimes cause a little trouble to an inattentive reader; it may also lead a critic to say that the writer was a bungler. Anticipating what is to follow is a historian's acknowledged right: to confound the exercise of this right with blundering indicates lack of critical ability. Apparently Mr. Smith considers that this well-known usage was all the Committee had to complain of in his treatment of the passage. But he might know that their objections to his criticism are altogether different. Put the two views side by side—

The *Speech* says :—	The *Article* says :—
1. The Chronicler was not a perfect Hebrew scholar ;	1. He did not thoroughly understand the old Hebrew writings ;
2. His writings show a little disorder of the text ; and	2. It is probable he dislocates the order of events ;
3. A little transposition of sources.	3. Assigns to 520 B.C. what really happened in 457 B.C. ; and
	4. The Chronicler committed an oversight.

But Mr. Smith also says that the Chronicler 'conveys the impression that large gifts for the temple were offered by the leading Jews on their first return (Ezra ii. 68, 69), that the foundation of the house was laid by Joshua and Zerubbabel in the second year of the return,' etc. He means to say, and to some extent he actually says, that this is an erroneous impression, and that the sacred writer was mistaken.[1] It was the ignorance and blundering charged upon the Chronicler that were before the Committee. But instead of directing attention to these weighty matters, Mr. Smith speaks of a small matter, viz. whether Ezra iv. 6–23 refers to the building of the temple or to the building of the city walls. The Committee state one thing; he puts forward another as the point in dispute.

To justify his charge of ignorance, he referred to the apostles' use

[1] Kuenen preceded him in part, at least, of this. See *Religion of Israel*, ii. 205.

of the old Greek translation known as the Septuagint, which is often inaccurate. But their case is different in every respect. They used the translation in circulation among those they were speaking or writing to, just as we use our common English Bible. It was not the apostles' object, any more than it would be ours, to call attention to an incorrect rendering, unless something of importance turned on the right translation being brought out. And this is what the apostles did, by implication at least. But the Chronicler was professing to write history in the language of the books he was using as sources, and his ignorance led him, according to Mr. Smith, to commit mistakes which, however, he assures us, do not impair the general utility of his work. We should be as thankful for this certificate to the Chronicler as for the grotesque information 'that the apostles, like the Chronicler, were not perfect Hebrew scholars' (p. 12). But why stop at the apostles? The argument cuts deeper, and closely touches their Master, for, according to Alford, 'Whereas the Evangelists themselves, in citing the Old Testament, usually quote from the Hebrew text, our Lord in His discourses almost uniformly quotes the Septuagint, even where it differs from the Hebrew.' What then?

(*b*) Inaccurate citing of witnesses in his favour.

But Mr. Smith is bolder still. So far as he knew, he said, there was not a single recent writer, not even Keil, who does not hold that the passage in Ezra referred to the building of the city walls and not to the temple. He ought to be aware that this is not the point in debate, and he ought also to be perfectly aware that he is without warrant in quoting Keil, at least, against the Report. The point in dispute is the blundering of the historian, the oversight, the antedating, the dislocation, the conveying of erroneous impressions. Keil denies that there is aught of the kind; Mr. Smith says there is. Keil and others aver that the passage was put where it stands 'for the sake of presenting at one glance a view of all the machinations against the Jews.' They refer the passage to the building of the city walls, not to the building of the temple, precisely as Mr. Smith does; but they deny that there is oversight or blundering, which Mr. Smith affirms. Keil is on the Committee's side, not on Mr. Smith's; for the Committee were thinking of 'over-

sight' and 'antedating,' not of city walls or of temple walls—a matter on which they would have pronounced no opinion. Here, then, Mr. Smith in his printed Speech attempts to lead evidence against the Committee, which turns out to be utterly against him and wholly in favour of the Report.

2. *The Rise of Written Prophecy.*

(*a*) Misstatement of the case in the Speech.

The case was thus stated by Mr. Smith against the Committee:—'The Committee report that, in attributing the rise of written prophecy to the eighth century before Christ, I appear to be at variance with the plain teaching of our Lord, who says, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me." Let us accept the whole traditional view; let us satisfy Dr. Wilson's heart, and say that Moses wrote the whole Pentateuch. Very well, that was at all events the Pentateuch; and the Pentateuch has always been called the Law, and neither our Lord, nor the Jews, nor any theologian in any age has ever called it part of the prophetical books. Our Lord always[1] speaks of the Law and the Prophets[2] as two distinct things. I do the same, and, doing so, state the undoubted fact that the earliest of the prophetic books[3] were written in the eighth century' (p. 24).

Mr. Smith has here set up a straw figure, charged it with great fury, and of course knocked it over. He has put down as facts what every one acquainted with the rudiments of the subject knows are not facts. And he has shrunk from facing the real point, which was something perfectly intelligible, but totally different from his statements. However, he has had no hesitation in laying the blame of ignorance at the door of the Committee: 'I cannot better leave my defence in the hands of the Commission than by pointing out that this Committee has been capable of founding a charge against me—whether from ignorance or from captiousness, I am unable to say—which has no other basis than disregard of the fact that the Hebrew Bible is divided into the Law, the Prophets,[2] and the Hagiographa.' These are the last words of the Speech. Not only do they misstate the point put forward by

[1] John xii. 34, xv. 25. [2] All the middle section of the Bible. [3] Half of it.

the Committee, but they are contradicted by facts, and by Mr. Smith's own words.

The Committee do not speak of *Prophecy*, or of the division of the Hebrew Bible known to the Jews as *The Prophets*. It is of these that Mr. Smith speaks, and speaks of them as if they were one and the same thing. It is not of these that the Report speaks, as any one may see. Out of the wide field of *prophecy* or *preaching*, the Committee chose one department of comparatively narrow area, *prediction*, or as it is called in the Report, 'prophecy in its predictive aspect.' Instead of confining himself to this narrow and well-understood area, Mr. Smith attributes to the word *prophecy* a meaning which it does not bear, and never has borne, for he holds that *prophecy* is the same as the division of the Bible called The Prophets. Every one at all read in the rudiments of the subject knows how unfounded, how ludicrous, indeed, this view must appear. Besides, even Mr. Smith himself calls one of the books of Moses 'a prophetic legislative programme,' and says it was 'rewritten in the prophetic spirit.' We were therefore entitled to look for *prophecy* in the law, according to his own written testimony! But to confine prophecy and prediction to the prophetical books properly so called, will be indeed a revolution in biblical literature; at least, our Lord says, 'All the prophets and the Law prophesied until John.'

(*b*) Mr. Smith contradicts himself.

Mr. Smith answers the Committee by saying that 'the earliest of the prophetic books were written in the eighth century.' This is a different statement from the one quoted in the Report. Remembering also that Mr. Smith has defined his use of the words 'prophetic books' to be what the Jews called 'The Prophets,' we shall see that it is an absurdly wrong statement. First, the words, *written prophecy arose in the eighth century* B.C., are one thing, and form the gist of the quotation made by the Committee. But *The Prophets* (as the middle division of the Hebrew Bible is called) *began to be written in the eighth century* B.C., is a totally different matter, and is Mr. Smith's translation of the Committee's words. The Committee speak of the thing called *prophecy* in its predictive aspect, and as it is found in all three divisions of the Hebrew Bible (Luke xxiv. 44); while Mr.

Smith proposes to confine *prophecy* to a few books which by a tradition of the Rabbins are called *The Prophets*.

But the statement is altogether unfounded that the earliest of the Prophets were written in the eighth century. When hazarding that view, Mr. Smith, without warning, and in two consecutive sentences, used the word Prophets in two meanings. By *The Prophets* in the second sentence he meant one-half, and in the first sentence, the whole of the middle division of the Hebrew Bible. It is split up by the Rabbins into the Former Prophets, viz. the Books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings; and the Latter Prophets, viz. the Books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve Minor Prophets. Now it is absurdly wrong to speak of all these having been written in and after the eighth century. It is not true in any view of the case whatever. Of the Books of Samuel, Mr. Smith says that *the older parts must have been written not long after the time of David*. This carries them back to the eleventh or tenth century B.C. But the Books of Samuel form part of the Prophets, a section, he says, not written earlier than the eighth century. Saying in one breath and unsaying in another, such as we have here, cannot be borne. The contradiction is glaring. But if Mr. Smith says he means by the prophetical books not the whole of those so called, but only the latter prophets, viz. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve Minor Prophets, then he evidently uses the same phrase, The Prophets, to taunt the Committee with not observing that he used it in the wider or rabbinical sense (All), and to shield himself from their attack by saying that he used it in the narrower or modern sense (Half). He cannot use it in both senses at the same time, but this is exactly what he does.

Nor is it even true that prophetic literature took its origin in the eighth century. Ewald will be allowed to be a better witness than Mr. Smith, and his testimony is quite clear. 'Of purely prophetic writings produced in the tenth century,' he says, 'there are now no extant remains.' However, he makes a kind of exception to this in the Book of Kings; but he proceeds: '*Pure prophetic*[1] composition advanced as early as Joel to a high degree of cultivation and perfection; although this prophet appeared about a century and a half before Isaiah, and belongs to the earlier period of prophecy.

[1] *History*, iv. 196, 197.

Moreover, Joel was certainly not the first prophet distinguished for such composition, but he was in early times the highest model of it.' A century and a half before Isaiah carries us back to the borders of the tenth century! And other prophetic writings before that day must therefore have been written in the tenth or eleventh century! But Mr. Smith has some fears of his own accuracy on this head; for in the article 'Bible' he says: 'There is a probability that Joel flourished in the ninth century, and that the opening verses of Amos are cited from his book.' There is no probability in the matter; it is quite certain to almost every one, except theorizers who follow the school of Graf and Kuenen.

(*c*) Denial of prophecy before the writing of the Prophets.

If Mr. Smith's concluding words have any meaning, they amount to this, that prophecy and the prophets—that is, the thing and the books in which the thing is most fully found—are interchangeable terms. According to him there was no written *prophecy*, and therefore there could still less be any written *prediction* before the earliest of these books in the middle division of the Bible were composed. Nobody ever knew this before. Every one knows that the thing is ludicrous. Even Mr. Smith himself[1] tells us of 'official prophetic societies, the unworthy successors of Samuel[2] and Elijah.'[3] There were thus prophetic societies and great prophets long prior to the eighth century. Jeremiah[4] affirms that prophets were never wanting in Israel from the exodus to his own time. If so, did they write or did they not write about Christ? Our Lord Himself says that one of them, Moses, foretold His coming. But Mr. Smith says Moses was not one of the prophets, the middle division of the Hebrew Bible. True enough; but he had the spirit of prophecy in larger measure than any of them, as we know from express statements (Num. xii. 7, 8; Deut. xxxiv. 10), and as has been always acknowledged. Who would question a thing so plain?

If Mr. Smith really wished to remove the fears of the Committee, or to disprove the inference drawn from his views, nothing was simpler. Their inference, that he could not regard the written prediction of our Lord's work by Moses as earlier than the eighth

[1] *Enc. Brit.* xi. 599 *a*.
[2] Eleventh century B.C.
[3] Tenth century B.C.
[4] Jer. vii. 25, xxviii. 8.

century, was either true or false. If it was false, he could have said so at once, and in plain terms. But if it be true, what good end can be served by going into vague and absurd statements about prophecy? Truth can never be advanced by these roundabouts.

3. *Song of Solomon.*

(*a*) Advance on the article 'Canticles.'

The Committee took exception to three things in Mr. Smith's treatment of this book—*first*, that 'it has suffered much from interpolation;' *second*, that 'it was not written down till a comparatively late date;' and, *third*, 'from imperfect recollection.' Of course, the negative in the second does not apply to the third of these particulars; at least the sense, though not the grammar, requires this. Of the three, Mr. Smith cannot well be said to have handled any but the first in his Speech, and there he limits himself to an 'acknowledgment of some passages as interpolations.' This is scarcely equal to the words complained of, 'suffered much from interpolation,' but the difference may be overlooked in presence of more serious matters. For here it must be remarked that he has made progress in his studies since he wrote the article 'Canticles.' At the end of that article he says 'the book must have been written' about twenty-five years after Solomon's death, though it will remain a mystery to every one why Ewald should fix on that period rather than on Solomon's lifetime. 'Imperfect recollection,' and 'not written down till a comparatively late date,' are therefore an unmistakeable advance. Of interpolations he then found only one (iv. 6), which exists both in the Hebrew and Septuagint, and is oddly enough called an interpolation; perhaps it is nothing of the kind. But he believed that 'an *a priori* probability of interpolations and corruptions is very great in a poem like Canticles;' a view of the matter which comes far short of the position he now holds, that it 'has suffered much from interpolation.' And yet Mr. Smith had the courage to say in his speech, 'Now, as to the Song of Solomon, I was tried upon that point in connection with my old article "Canticles," and I was acquitted upon it.'[1]

[1] The boldness of Professor Lindsay in his Reasons of Dissent is startling (No. 5): 'Besides, every statement about the Song of Solomon in article "Hebrew Language and Literature" had been already made in article "Canticles."'

(*b*) Misstatement of evidence from the Septuagint.

How then does Mr. Smith prove that there are interpolations? 'By the use of the versions,' he says; 'from the ancient versions,' Professor Lindsay says in his Reasons of Dissent. And what *versions?* 'It is the original Septuagint,' Mr. Smith adds, 'which is to us the principal means for going over and correcting the received text of the Old Testament;' for 'it is plain that such a version as the Septuagint carries us with a single leap over a span of twelve hundred years,' farther back than our most ancient manuscript of the Hebrew Bible. The Greek translation was made say 200 B.C.; and the earliest Hebrew manuscript dates from the tenth century after Christ. But if the Song in this most valuable version be compared with the Hebrew, no interpolations will be found. A word is read differently here and there, showing most conclusively that the Greek translator was neither a perfect Hebrew nor a perfect Greek scholar; but there are no traces of interpolation. Is it all a blunder on Mr. Smith's part? However, after devoting nearly a page to this use of the Septuagint, its high antiquity and its critical value—all of them utterly against his interpolation theory—he suddenly changes his whole argument: 'My study of that version, particularly with the aid of the Syro-hexaplar, which is one of our chief helps for the Septuagint,' etc. The Septuagint does duty by drawing attention to antiquity, critical value, and vast importance. But it is not the version referred to at all. The Syro-hexaplar is the one! The Septuagint is a translation from the original Hebrew, as everybody knows; the Syro-hexaplar is not more than a translation from a translation. Only nine lines previously in his Speech Mr. Smith spoke of the antiquity of the Septuagint, the 'twelve hundred years.' A careless hearer or reader will attribute this antiquity to the work really relied on—the Syro-hexaplar. But what does Mr. Smith himself say about this work in his article 'Bible'? He calls it 'the Syriac translation composed by Paul of Tela (616 A.D.).'[1] Here there is a tumble-down of the antiquity from twelve to three hundred years; while a claim for honours which can be paid only to the original Septuagint is put in for a comparatively modern translation from the Greek, of which we know little with certainty, except that it was

[1] *Ency. Brit.* iii. 646 *b*. On the subject of Hexaplars see Lagarde, *Genesis*, p. 16.

made out of a previous translation from the Hebrew. But the jumble is worse than ever. He so far rejects the Hebrew original because the oldest manuscript dates only from the tenth century of our era. He sets against it the Septuagint Greek, which was written say about 200 B.C., eleven or twelve hundred years earlier. But he forgets that the oldest manuscript of that Greek version is not older than the fourth century of our era, a fact which lops off about six from his eleven centuries. And when he shifts his ground to appeal to the Syro-hexaplar, he does not care to tell us how old the oldest manuscript of that work may be! So here is a jumble and a maze, in comparison with which the old paths are vastly better. Why should more be said on this head? If the Committee had done what Mr. Smith has done—using versions when he refers to only one; claiming support for his view from the Septuagint when it gives him none; and partly correcting himself by quoting a comparatively modern translation (made no one knows how), so that hearers and readers could not fail to confound it with the ancient Greek text—had the Committee done this, words would have failed to denounce their ignorance and unfairness.

(*c*) Inaccurate evidence cited from Mark xvi. 9–20.

Mr. Smith supports his view of interpolations in the Song by these words: 'Is it not admitted by the most orthodox scholars that the last verses of the Gospel of Mark are a fragment of some other evangelical narrative? Are they less valuable because they are a fragment?' It required some courage to advance this argument, at least in the manner quoted. Dean Alford, with over-readiness to reject what is written, uses words not unlike those employed by Mr. Smith. 'It is an authentic fragment, placed as a completion of the gospel in very early times.' But as a support to Mr. Smith's view, it is thoroughly useless. Scrivener will be accepted by every scholar as a critic whose word ought to have more weight in this question. And his view rests on a thorough study of the manuscripts. 'This fact,' he says, 'has driven those who reject the concluding verses to the strangest fancies; that, like Thucydides, the Evangelist was cut off before his work was completed, or even that the last leaf of the original gospel was torn away. . . . we can appeal to the reading of Irenæus and of *both* the older Syriac

translations in the second century; of nearly all other versions, and of all extant manuscripts excepting two.'[1] To cite this paragraph from Mark's Gospel as evidence in his favour cannot be regarded as a worthy treatment of manuscripts and ancient versions by Mr. Smith.

(*d*) Professor Lindsay's misstatements.

In the Reasons of Dissent, Professor Lindsay affirms that 'the statement quoted about the Song of Solomon is only asserted by Professor Smith to be a probability.' And of this 'probable conjecture' he writes under the same head, 'The existence of interpolations is proved from the ancient versions.'

Seldom is there witnessed a more singular jumble of words and ideas in so brief a space. Mr. Smith made three different statements about the Song. Professor Lindsay calls the three one, and this one statement he describes first as a probability, but as he discovers immediately after that it is *proved*, it must therefore be a fact! It is not the probability which is proved; it is the existence of interpolation. But Mr. Smith does not speak of interpolations as a probability. He affirms that the Song has suffered much from them, while he limits the probability to 'imperfect recollection,' and to recent writing out of the poem. Nor does this list exhaust Professor Lindsay's liberties with his friend's words. He ventures to appeal to 'ancient versions,' while Mr. Smith discreetly confines himself to one very recent version of a version! If this way of handling a scientific question be considered an exhibition of learning, most people will think it does not differ at all from ignorance.

Professor Lindsay also says that the Song 'contains Greek and Persian words and phrases.' On any view of the matter, *Persian and Greek* would have been better than *Greek and Persian*, but in such a confusion of thought as is presented in these Reasons, so small a matter may well pass. But what are the Persian and Greek words and phrases? Until Professor Lindsay enlighten the world, it must be content to remain in darkness. It is no doubt well known that one Persian word and one Greek word were fished up out of the depths of somebody's reading of the Song, and paraded as proofs of its late origin. But how were they received by Gesenius and Samuel Davidson?—men who are surely Professor Lindsay's betters

[1] Introduction, 512, 513.

in this field of research, and, we hope, further advanced in critical radicalism than he. They were repudiated as nothing of the kind. And so, till the new light reveal itself more clearly than by proclaiming its coming, the world must remain in the darkness which contented great scholars like Gesenius. But if these do not carry weight enough with any mind, the last sentence of Mr. Smith's article on 'Canticles' may show how he regarded the 'Greek and Persian' theory at the time it was written: 'Thus the book must have been written about the middle of the tenth century B.C. The attempt of Grätz[1] to bring down the date to the Grecian period (about 230 B.C.) is ingenious, but nothing more.' This should satisfy everybody that it would be waste of time to say another word.

4. *The Book of Jashar.*

(*a*) Misstatement of the Committee's Position.

Mr. Smith's words are: 'I suppose the gravamen of the charge here is in the statement that the Book of Jashar was not earlier than the time of Solomon.' It is difficult to restrain from condemning in strong terms a misrepresentation so bold. The Committee are here held up as objecting to Mr. Smith's view of the date to which the composition of the Book of Jashar should be assigned. But he might know that the Committee never had that matter under debate. Jashar may have been like many other books—perhaps like the Book of Psalms—added to from age to age by prophets and priests; but that was not an inquiry which fell to the Committee to engage in, and Mr. Smith knows that. The Committee say—(1) that Mr. Smith places the historical books, elsewhere called a continuous narrative—from Genesis to Kings—later than the Book of Jashar; (2) that he assigns Jashar to the time of Solomon at the earliest; and (3) that therefore he assigns all the historical books to times subsequent to Solomon. Mr. Smith is concerned about the date of Jashar; the Committee are concerned about the dates of the historical books from Genesis to Kings. Any one may say that Jashar received part of its contents in Joshua's days, part in Samuel's, and part in David's; but to affirm that the historical books from Genesis to Kings—as the Committee think Mr. Smith practically does—are

[1] See further on this point, *Speaker's Commentary*, 4, p. 700.

all later than Solomon's reign, is a serious business. Mr. Smith must have read the Report very carelessly if he believes that he has correctly stated the Committee's view. But any stick is good enough wherewith to belabour the Committee's back.

(*b*) Inaccurate quoting of the Septuagint.

In the article *Hebrew Literature,* Mr. Smith maintains that a fragment of the Book of Jashar was recovered by Wellhausen, an often-quoted Rationalist, from the Septuagint version of 1 Kings viii. A reference so indefinite suggested the desirability of examining the whole chapter. Of course, no Book of Jashar was found in it, not even in verse 53, which turned out to be the part referred to. But although this was spoken of as a thing the Committee could not let pass without loss of credit, Professor Lindsay repeated the assertion in his Reasons of Dissent: 'Professor Smith, founding on the Septuagint, says it contained a fragment referring to the building of the temple.' And Professor Smith in his Speech, alluding evidently to what was said in the Committee, declared that 'to restore the Septuagint text depends upon certain delicate operations which require a peculiar training.' 'I know a great deal has been said[1] about the fragment of it referring to the building of the temple, which I state to have been recovered from the Septuagint of 1 Kings viii. . . . But on careful examination and inquiry, a passage will be found given as a quotation from the Book of Jashar, which says that Solomon, when he opened the temple, rose and said.' And here we shall put Mr. Smith's translation side by side with Bagster's[2]:—

Mr. Smith's.	*Bagster's.*
'The Lord created the sun in the heavens, but He saith that He will dwell in thick darkness; build a house for me, a house of habitation, that I may dwell therein for ever.'—1 Kings viii. 53.	'He manifested the sun in the heavens; the Lord said He would dwell in darkness; build thou my house, a beautiful house for thyself to dwell in anew. Behold, is not this written in the Book of the Song?'

[1] Where? The loss of credit to the Committee which is mentioned in the text seems to be referred to; at least nothing else can be conjectured as probable. Mr. Smith, therefore, knew what passed in the Committee. This gave him time to prepare page 15 of the Speech, and to indicate the *edition* of the Septuagint he was quoting; but beyond some reference to Lagarde by Professor Lindsay, there has been no attempt to give satisfaction on this point. Lagarde has published Genesis in the Greek (1868), but he has not fulfilled his intention of publishing more of the Septuagint.

[2] The words in italics show the additions and changes made by Mr. Smith on three Greek lines, the words within brackets [ ] show the usual rendering. '*The Lord* created the sun in the heavens; *but* he said [the Lord said] that he will dwell in thick

The errors in Mr. Smith's account of this verse almost make one think he has never seen it in the Greek. He begins with saying that Solomon *rose and said.* Now it is distinctly related that the king was on his knees when he uttered the words quoted by Mr. Smith, for in the following verse we are told that he rose up from kneeling before the altar as soon as the words were spoken (ver. 54).[1] Mr. Smith also affirms that the passage will be found given as a quotation from the Book of Jashar. Bagster's translation shows that this is not the fact. But Mr. Smith further maintains that this imaginary fragment refers to the building of the temple. And how does he prove his assertion? By rejecting, or seeming to reject, one clause, and altering another! His translation runs, 'Build a house for me, a house of habitation, that I may dwell therein for ever.' But he omits or alters the clause, 'a beautiful house for thyself to dwell in,' or, what is equally serious, he presents it in an entirely new dress, without assigning any authority for so doing. He holds that the quotation refers to the building of the temple. To prove this, he throws aside the longer clause, which refers to the building of Solomon's own house! Then he translates 'anew' by 'for ever,' which is very fine, only it is not usual. The words rendered 'anew' are perhaps untranslateable. And the whole passage, instead of being a splendid piece of poetry, as Mr. Smith holds, is but a jumble, not unlike many other jumbles in the Greek version.

But where is the Book of Jashar all this time? It seems that it can only be found by careful inquiry, peculiar training, and delicate handling. No doubt this is true; but unfortunate it was that an ignorant assembly was not enlightened on the process. The tedium of a lengthened sitting might have been relieved a little, if

darkness; build a house *for me* [my house], a [beautiful] house *of habitation* [for thyself] *that I may* [to] dwell therein *for ever* [anew].' Liberties so great can be taken with no text by any scholar till he has first established his right to do so. This Mr. Smith has neither done nor attempted. The first two words are a well-known various reading, which may be correct or not. But as the Speech was strengthened by references added in the revised edition (p. 20), it would have been easy to have done something similar here. No one could have made these changes without some authority.

[1] The mistake is curious, as showing how cursorily the story had been read by the critic. In 1 Kings viii. 22, Solomon, before he began to pray, is said to have *stood* before the altar. But it appears that he was *kneeling* all the time of prayer. A contradiction, then? Not at all. The despised chronicler explains the whole (2 Chron vi. 13).

the process at all resembles the one by which long ago the Greek word for *Song* was shown to be transmutable into the Hebrew word for *Jashar*. Probably the modern crucible treats the word to precisely the same changes as it underwent before. But as the 'certain delicate operations' Mr. Smith speaks of are left for us to imagine, we must be content with the more candid description of the first inventor. And here it is. Out of a dozen Hebrew words for *Song*, choose the one most suitable for transmutation, and assume that that was the word the Greek translator had in the manuscript he was translating. Clearly this will be the word *Shir*. But every scholar knows that the vowel sound *i* might readily have been spoken or written for *a*. If this be allowed as a second assumption, *Shir* at once becomes *Shar*. But it is also well known and universally admitted that the prefix *Ja*, represented by one letter, and that the smallest in the Hebrew alphabet, has sometimes dropped out, or been transposed, or come to grief in other ways. Suppose, third, that it ought to be prefixed to *Shar*. You have then the transmutation complete: *Jashar* is before you. These are 'delicate operations,' no doubt; but by such grammatical legerdemain you may get anything you wish from anything else, or you may stretch words and syllables on the wheel, till you torture them into saying what you are resolved they shall say. History, however, records that those who pride themselves on their success in these 'delicate operations' find, in the long run, that they have only earned the laughter, or, at the best, the neglect of sensible scholars, who always regard such discoveries as confessions wrung from a wretched word, stretched and torn on an inquisitor's rack. Mr. Smith has not said that these are the delicate operations he refers to. By leaving them vague and dark, he may impress unlearned readers with the idea that his are fine and infallible. But see further on this point, note, p. 48.

(*c*) Mr. Smith's contradiction of his own words.

In connection with this part of the Speech it may be well to quote Mr. Smith against Mr. Smith, because, with a blindness altogether incredible, he speaks of the 'statement' made in the Report as 'grossly unfair.' He seems to have forgotten his own words. Thus:

The *Speech*, p. 18 :—

'The statement of the Report is grossly unfair, in assuming, as it does, that I do not think there was any writer before David, when I have pointed out so expressly that the older parts of Samuel are practically contemporary with the events they record,' etc.

Article, *Heb. Lit.*:—

'A scribe was attached to the roya court from the reign of David downwards and the older parts of the Book of Samuel which must have been written not long after the time of that king, are framed in a masterly style.'

There are two things to be said about these contradictory extracts. One is, that the Committee never said that Mr. Smith denied the existence of writers before the time of David. They knew better; for his theory of writers and writings was before the Committee in its full details, as we shall see afterwards. He knows, or ought to know, this. A man who is so very touchy about quotations from his own writings as Mr. Smith has shown himself to be, ought to be careful not to misquote other people, far less to represent them as saying what they neither said nor thought. But this he has done most unwarrantably. He misrepresents the Committee's words by asserting that they meant 'any writer.' The words used in the passage of the Report referred to are 'the narrative'[1]—a difference so great as to justify the sharpest language being applied to his statement. It is notorious that, in his opinion, 'the narrative,' as we now have it, is long posterior to David's time. This was the Committee's meaning, as Mr. Smith ought at least to know, for they use his own words. It is equally notorious that Mr. Smith believes there were *writings* before David's time, and therefore *writers;* and the Committee not only recognised this, but some members even thought that the peculiar view taken by him of these writings, instead of making his position better, made it worse. So much, then, for the utter baselessness of the charge he makes—that the statement of the Committee was 'grossly unfair.'

But there is a second and an equally serious point brought out in these extracts. Mr. Smith affirmed in his Speech that he had 'expressly pointed out that the older parts of Samuel are practically contemporary with the events they record.' If Mr. Smith has expressly pointed this out, he has strange notions of the meaning of words and of the lapse of time. An angry man, irritated by the previous words, would, in his haste, come out with the remark that it was not true; perhaps he would stick to this after reflection. For

[1] Or, 'Present Historical Books of the Old Testament.'—*Report*, p. 5.

Mr. Smith's real words were, that these older parts were written not long after the time of David. Now, David died about 1016 B.C.; say, therefore, that they were written in 1000 B.C. Then, as the story of Hannah, the death of Eli, and the rise of Samuel all happened more than a century before David's death, we have these oldest events in the book dating from 1136 B.C., at least, or about 140 years before they were committed to writing. The whole of Saul's reign, also, was thus 60 or even 100 years before the writing down of the history, according to the meaning assigned to 'not long after.' But biblical criticism, the meanings of words, chronology—everything, in fact, must be put in the wrong, that Mr. Smith may triumph over a Committee whose Report he answers by finding in it what is not there.

5. *The Prophecy of Jeremiah* l., li.

(*a*) Misstatement of the case by Mr. Smith.

Mr. Smith affirms that this Prophecy of Jeremiah is anonymous. Professor Lindsay evidently holds that this is his view. Properly, however, he does not go so far in the printed Speech. He only says, what Professor Lindsay also says, that 'in the oldest Septuagint text the name of Jeremiah does not occur in the title of the chapter, which I call anonymous, but that does not prove that the prophecy is not an inspired prophecy' (p. 22). Now this is not the statement made by Mr. Smith and complained of by the Committee. What he really writes in the *Encyclopædia* is wholly different. He said in his Speech as it is printed, that he calls a certain *chapter* anonymous; he really did no such thing, for his words are:—'"The holy and beautiful house where our fathers praised Thee" was a chief thought of the sorrowing exiles, and to one anonymous *writer* the Lord's vengeance on Babylon appears eminently as vengeance for His temple (Jer. l. 28).'[1] In his Speech we find *anonymous chapter;* in the Article referred to by the Committee we find *anonymous writer.* It is for Mr. Smith to explain himself, if he can. Perhaps it may be ignorance or captiousness to condemn a man for saying 'chapter' was what he wrote, when the word really printed was 'writer.' But, whatever be the explanation, Mr. Smith

[1] *Ency. Brit.* xi. 370 *b.*

knows that the difference between the two words, in this case at least, is immense. If an author put his name not to the first chapter of his book but to the last, the man would be laughed at who said that the first chapter was anonymous; he would be summarily thrust out of court as not worth reasoning with if he said the *writer* was anonymous. But Mr. Smith has fallen into both these blunders. Unable to defend his first statement, that the *writer* is anonymous, which the Committee take exception to, he says one chapter is anonymous, which is not the point in dispute, and is, besides, altogether indefensible, for

(*b*) Mr. Smith's original statement is wrong.

Mr. Smith refuses to receive the evidence of Jer. l. 1 as proof that the prophecy was written by Jeremiah. He affirms that the Hebrew heading not only may be, but actually is, wrong, for it is wanting in the 'oldest Septuagint version.' He does not say *the heading of the prophecy*, but only *the heading of the chapter*, and the word 'oldest' is most uselessly added before Septuagint. As the prophecy extends over two chapters (l., li.), it makes no difference where the name of the writer is found. And the name is given so often, and with such fulness of detail in the Septuagint, as well as in the Hebrew, that its omission in one verse is not of the smallest moment (Jer. li. 59–64). To cite the first verse of the prophecy in the Greek as evidence for considering the whole of it anonymous, is as senseless as to say that a book is anonymous because the writer has put his name at the end and not at the beginning. Mr. Smith says the name of Jeremiah is wanting at the beginning of this prophecy in the Greek, therefore he infers it is anonymous. But it is found three times at the end, and under circumstances which leave no doubt of its genuineness; therefore we hold that there is no excuse for calling it anonymous. For the ground he has taken up, and for the reason he has alleged in support of it, Mr. Smith is wholly without excuse. The one is as unscholarly as the other.

But why does the Greek version omit the name of Jeremiah from the heading of the prophecy? No doubt the question is hard to answer satisfactorily. Still, it is worth observing that the Greek version does not place chaps. l., li. in the connection found in our

Bible. It places them immediately after another prophecy in which Babylon is introduced, and in which Jeremiah is named as the author (xlvi. 13–28). Mixed up with the tale of Babylon's greatness and fall are found, throughout both these prophecies, assurances of comfort to down-trodden Zion, as if these assurances formed a thread on which the woes and triumphs of Babylon were strung by the Greek translator. On this view of the matter the Greek heading of the prophecy is not Jer. l. 1, but Jer. xlvi. 13, or, at any rate, Jer. xxv. 13, and that translation gives the name of Jeremiah as the utterer of it, precisely as does the Hebrew. But be this or be it not a correct explanation of the want of the prophet's name in the verse, of which Mr. Smith has made so unfair a use, there can be no doubt that he has done nothing whatever to clear away difficulties of this nature, except by making assumptions which render the difficulties tenfold more serious.

(*c*) Misuse of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Mr. Smith, speaking of 'the anonymous writer in the Book of Jeremiah,' says: 'All I need do is to point out that an exact parallel to this prophecy, in the sense in which I speak of it, is to be found in the case of the Epistle to the Hebrews.' There is not a shadow of foundation for this 'exact parallel.' The prophecy in Jeremiah contains the prophet's name four times, and even the Greek translation gives it three times at least. But the name of Paul is nowhere read at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of the Epistle to the Hebrews. There is no parallel between them to support Mr. Smith's view. Of course, if Mr. Smith refuses to receive the Hebrew original in preference to the Greek translation, and if he says that the latter half of the prophecy in chap. li. 59–64 refers to something altogether different from the earlier half, then anything may be asserted, passed off as probable, and be allowed room to grow in the realm of the New Criticism.

II. Popular Expositions.

On the method of popular exposition adopted by Mr. Smith in the Speech, it is possible to say much if it were worth while.

After the specimens of learned criticism, popularly put, which have been already examined, it would be unwise to dwell at length on all the popular expositions contained in the Speech. Two or three of the most important will suffice to vindicate the position of the Committee. Hebrew law and history from the time of Moses stand out as the chief.

1. *Hebrew Law and History.*

(*a*) Misleading view of tradition.

Referring to the mode of writing history practised by Arabian writers, Mr. Smith says: 'Let me illustrate this by an example from profane history. The earliest extant historical and traditional collections for the life of Mohammed were written some two centuries later than the events they record. Yet in these writings older books now lost have been so conscientiously copied, and genuine reminiscences of the prophet's contemporaries have been handed down so exactly in the words of the first narrator, that many of Mohammed's sayings and doings stand before us as exactly and vividly as if we had been eye-witnesses of the events. I believe it was in this way that our present historical books came together.' Certainly if the parallel be exact, the sorrowful conclusion will soon be reached that our present historical books are, like Canticles, a product of 'imperfect recollection.'

In the first place, it is unwarrantable to speak of the sources from which the life of Mahomet is drawn, as dating two centuries after the events. The Koran itself is left out of account, and that is accepted as to all intents and purposes a collection of documents contemporary with Mahomet. Then it is also unwarrantable to represent extracts from older books, 'conscientiously copied,' as being of the same age with the later books into which they were copied. Sir William Muir, whose right to be heard will be admitted by all, says: 'Muhammad Ibn Ishac is the earliest biographer of whom any extensive remains, the authorship of which can certainly be distinguished, have reached us.'[1] As he died 141 years after the prophet, he must have collected materials for his history ten or twenty or thirty years before. Mr. Smith's two

[1] Sir William Muir, *Smaller Life of Mahomet*, p. 605.

centuries require, therefore, to be cut down by one-third at least; and the high praise he gives to succeeding historians for a conscientious copying of their predecessors is not wholly borne out by facts.[1] But his admiration of the vivid and exact traditions is not shared by accurate writers; for out of 600,000 traditions collected regarding Mahomet, only 4000 are deemed correct, while of these the European critic will reject at least one-half. And this is the case, although, about a century after Mahomet, the Caliph Omar II. gave orders 'for the formal collection of all extant traditions.'[2] To draw a parallel between these histories or traditions and the sacred books of the Jews, is to degrade the latter to a level with the legendary stories of other ancient nations, as shall now be shown.[3]

(*b*) Misrepresentation of Hebrew history.

Those who do not happen to be acquainted with the mode of proof by which critics have arrived at the result that the early history of ancient Rome, copious and detailed though it be, is a series of poetic and untrustworthy legends, will receive with incredulity the statement that Mr. Smith has adopted precisely the same mode of proof to establish his view that early Hebrew history is an authentic narrative of facts. Most likely he was not aware of the result of the process he had hit on. But in the hands of Lord Macaulay and other able expounders of classical criticism, it leads to the conclusion that the early history of Rome, from about 750 B.C. to 390 B.C., is a mass of fable and legend, founded on some grains of fact. In the hands of Mr. Smith, precisely the same mode of proof leads to the conclusion that the early history of the Hebrews from 2200 B.C. to about 750 B.C. is an authentic narrative of facts. Assuming, what we have yet to prove, that the mode of proof is the same in both cases, it may be thought that the additions of inspiration and infallibility by Mr. Smith convert the turbid stream of

[1] Sir William Muir, *Smaller Life of Mahomet*, p. 607. [2] *Ibid.* p. 567.

[3] The books read on the banks of the Bosphorus, detailing the sayings and actions of Mahomet, are not such as would satisfy the science of a European critic. They are drawn, as might be expected, from the half million of rejected traditions. But the sacred books of the Jews had contemporary records and a kingdom's treasured archives for their originals, if the books are true; and they were *the* books read far and near by Hebrew men and women.

legend and fable into the pure waters of truth. The lines on which Macaulay and the great classical critics travel, lead them to find myth and romance in a history which only begins where the disputed history of the Hebrew people practically ends. Mr. Smith travels along precisely the same lines for much more remote history. But they conduct him—and him alone of all the critics—to indubitable facts. If inspiration and infallibility form the switch whereby he passes off these lines on to those of truth, he will have a hard task if he attempt to persuade the world that that switch ever could exist save in his own imagination.

Passing by his remark on 'the little prejudices of little minds who have not studied eastern history' as singularly out of place, we find the following on the 'continuous story from Genesis to the end of Second Kings:' 'The narrative, therefore, in its present form, as it came from the hand of the last editor, is not older than the exile. But its historical value is vindicated by the observation that the work is really due to a succession of writers, acting upon the same method which has secured for us an authentic record of the profane history of the East.' We have already seen that the parallel between Bible history and the life of Mahomet, drawn by Mr. Smith in this connection, is not reassuring to seekers after truth. But dismissing the parallel as unsatisfactory, we learn that the whole narrative, from Genesis to Second Kings, is in its present shape not older than the exile. A general statement like this may mean a great deal, or it may mean nothing at all. Unquestionably it has an ugly look about it, quite as ugly as if any one were to affirm, which he might do with some show of reason, that the New Testament is, in its present shape, not older than the time of the Elzevirs, who published the edition which was current for two centuries. 'The successive writers, one coming after the other, although they might have something to add, actually quoted in their own words the older historians; and in no other possible way can so accurate and so contemporary a record for remote antiquity be obtained as that gives.' This then is the theory of the Speech; writer following writer, always quoting those who went before, but always adding a bit of his own till the last editor gave the finishing touch, and made the final additions during or not before the exile. Of facts in support of the theory none are adduced, except the traditions about

the life of Mahomet. Of facts against the theory we need say nothing, as Mr. Smith was bound to prove, not to assert his views.

But the theory, as thus presented in the Speech, wears a different aspect from what it has in the Article. According to the latter, the continuous narrative of which Mr. Smith speaks, exhibits three different, well-marked stages of growth, corresponding precisely to the three stages of growth in the legends and history of ancient Rome, and other nations. These are thus given in his own words: (1) 'The earliest products of Hebrew authorship seem to have been lyrics and laws, which would circulate in the first instance from mouth to mouth without the use of written copies.'[1] But (2) there were at a later period 'early written collections of lyrics prior to our present historical books—the *Book of the Wars of Jehovah* (Num. xxi. 14), and the *Book of Jashar* (Josh. x. 2; 2 Sam. i.).' These ancient pieces were poems. But 'it is certain,' he says, 'that ancient law was handed down by ancient tradition and local custom to a much later date than the time of Moses,' of whom 'it may fairly be made a question whether he left in writing any other laws than the commandments on the tables of stone.' A third phase followed, for (3) 'written history began comparatively early,' —certainly in the time of David. Mr. Smith informs his readers that the early prose, which thus began to be written, 'was taken over and incorporated in their works by later historians;' while 'the early lyric collections have disappeared, all but a few fragments, presumably because their tone was prevailingly secular.'

Having reached a 'masterly' prose writer, we might stop. But Mr. Smith goes a step farther. He has got (1) oral songs or ballads; (2) written ballads; (3) chronicles in prose; and he adds as the topstone of his building, a great historian: 'On such principles minor narratives were fused together one after the other; and at length, in exile, a final redactor completed the great work, on the first part of which Ezra based his reformation, while the latter part was thrown into the second canon.'[2]

Before we proceed to compare these views with Lord Macaulay's view of legendary history in general, it is well to keep in mind that orally-transmitted songs are first assumed, then written collections of them are assumed, next the disappearance of these is assumed,

[1] *Ency. Brit.* xi. 598 *a*. [2] *Bible*, p. 638 *a*.

and lastly a reason for this disappearance is assumed. On what, then, does the theory rest? On assumption after assumption. There are no facts given to justify these large assumptions. Everything is taken for granted with the easy credulity of a writer, who has no doubt that these manifold drafts on the Bank of Faith will be honoured by every thinker. To say that here law and history are as old as the oldest of these songs is more in accordance with common sense than this mass of assumptions. But let us see where the roots and source of the theory really lie.

Lord Macaulay, discovering a grievous blunder committed by Hume in his *History of England*, and illustrating from it the legendary history of Rome, thus writes: 'When we turn to William of Malmesbury, we find that Hume, in his eagerness to relate these pleasant fables, has overlooked one very important circumstance. William does indeed tell both the stories; but he gives us distinct notice that he does not warrant their truth, and that they rest on no better authority than that of ballads. Such is the way in which these two well-known tales have been handed down. They originally appeared in a poetical form. They found their way from ballads into an old chronicle. The ballads perished; the chronicle remained. A great historian, some centuries after the ballads had been altogether forgotten, consulted the chronicle. He was struck by the lively colouring of these ancient fictions; he transferred them to his pages; and thus we find inserted, as unquestionable facts, in a narrative which is likely to last as long as the English tongue, the inventions of some minstrel whose works were probably never committed to writing, whose name is buried in oblivion, and whose dialect has become obsolete.' Let Lord Macaulay's method be compared with Mr. Smith's. Let it be also borne in mind that the former relates, in the first place at least, to events alleged to have happened in England not a thousand years ago, while the latter relates to pieces of history transacted in Palestine more than one thousand five hundred years earlier. Here is the parallel:—

Lord Macaulay's Method.	*Mr. Smith's Method.*
1. Ballads, oral or written: authors unknown — lively colour of these ancient fictions. Then,	1. Songs or lyrics—unwritten ballads —not religious. Then,
2. Ballads perished and were forgotten, after they had found their way into an old chronicle (prose).	2. Written collections of songs, which, except a few fragments, have disappeared, presumably because they were not reli-

	gious; preserved in the prose writings which 'embodied many poems, legends, and other remains.'
3. A great historian, struck by the lively colour of these ancient fictions, transferred them from the chronicle to his pages.	3. A great historian, writing 'in a masterly style,' includes in his book 'the narratives that are fullest of human interest, and the poetry richest in colour and imagination.'
4. The product is Untrustworthy Legend.[1]	4. The product is an Authentic Narrative of facts.

Mr. Smith's premises are exactly the same as Lord Macaulay's. But the conclusion in the former case is *authentic history;* in the latter, the conclusion is *untrustworthy legend.* To say that Mr. Smith assumes the inspiration of the ballads, or of the chronicle that followed them, or of the continuous history which followed the chronicle, does not disprove the conclusion which must follow from the premises. It is demanding from us belief in a miracle, for which there is no reasonable call—belief, too, in a miracle which overrides all the laws affecting the transmission of songs, and ballads, and legends. To this demand men will turn a deaf ear. Whoever makes it, let him charm as wisely as he may, will meet with ridicule; legend will be legend and nothing else. Lord Macaulay, representing the reason and the instincts of men in this matter, will be treated with respect, as he deserves to be.

It will not be denied that, had God so chosen, he could have enabled editor after editor to sift the wheat from the chaff in popular ballads and songs, to impart to the wheat a sublimely religious character, and to present the whole in the form of a thoroughly authentic and even highly poetical history. This is Mr. Smith's theory of history and inspiration at once. But it is the ordinary theory of mythical or legendary history, without the inspiration of truth being breathed into it. Of proof for this theory of inspiration Mr. Smith has given none; we may safely say, there is none to be had. In proof of his theory of an authentic history, he quotes the life of Mahomet, which not only does not support his view, but may satisfy every one that history, written as he imagines, cannot rise higher than its source—legend. He and his friends deride some-

[1] Ticknor, in his *History of Spanish Literature,* Period I., chap. vi.–x., has shown the same principles at work in comparatively recent times, ballads, always changing, going to the manufacture of chronicles, and these latter recording stories which 'must be almost entirely fabulous.'

thing or other which they call the mechanical theory of inspiration, but which nobody seems to understand. Yet here, on the theory avowed by Mr. Smith, editor after editor picks out the wheat from the chaff, adds some wheat of his own, and presents his labours to the world as authentic history. Did these editors choose the wheat of real facts, and throw away the chaff of legend on the human principles which guided the Moslem critics in selecting 4000 traditions of Mahomet's life, and in throwing away half a million more? If so, then the history from Genesis to 2 Kings is a purely human production, and must be judged as such. And there is common sense in so treating it, if any one will. But were the editors guided by a divine power to choose the facts, and to reject the legends? If so, then the new theory of history and inspiration is entirely mechanical; at least, it is as mechanical a theory as any other. And it also introduces some fear lest, under the guise of history, we have only inspired legends or parables, or whatever you like to call these old world stories. Let it be borne in mind that the thing denied is not Mr. Smith's belief in the authenticity of the narrative, but the probability of an authentic narrative coming to us in the way he believes.

Here, then, are two things quite distinct, which Mr. Smith has driven together to the confusion and danger of both—the history and the inspiration. That his theory of history by itself is a probable theory of an authentic history, we believe no critic will for one moment allow. That 'in no other possible way can so accurate and so contemporary a record for remote antiquity be obtained as that gives,' may be Mr. Smith's opinion, but it is not Lord Macaulay's. On the other hand, the traditional view, as it is contemptuously called, proceeds upon the well-defined lines, which all historians lay down as tests of fact and discoverers of legend. It says that the men who lived and acted at the time of certain events wrote down what they did or saw or knew, or at least what they got from unimpeachable sources of knowledge. There may be difficulties in fully establishing all this, as there are difficulties about every authentic history; but the fact remains, that this so-called traditional view has an immense advantage over that propounded by Mr. Smith. His theory leads to myth and legend; this other leads to authentic history. With the question of inspiration it is different.

That Mr. Smith's theory of inspiration is a possible theory no one ought to deny; that it is a probable theory may be questioned. What inspiration is, how it affects the man, how it preserves and yet modifies his individuality, are questions we may guess at, but can never fully answer. There is thus a wide field for speculation. We know, for example, that the evangelist Luke sifted the materials for his Gospel, choosing and rejecting as an ordinary historian would. But he claimed 'eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word' as the sources of his knowledge. Would a gospel written two hundred years later be equally well received as authentic history, on the ground that the writer was inspired to gather together the facts, and to throw away the romance and the legends? This is claimed by Mr. Smith to be true of the generally-received life of Mahomet, apart from inspiration altogether. He cannot expect critics and historians to accept this view. If, however, the distance in time were not one century or two, but ten centuries, is it probable that any thinking men would receive the history as authentic because it was said to be inspired? But this seems to be Mr. Smith's theory—*seems*, for there is a lack of clear scientific statement of his views. Certainly it is unbecoming in those who sympathise with this theory, or any form of it, to speak of the mechanical theories of other people.

2. *Jonah: Ruth: Daniel.*

(*a*) Misrepresentations and inaccuracies in the Speech.

'As for the Book of Jonah,' Mr. Smith says in his published Speech, 'on this point I have said nothing more than before. I have not tied myself to a theory, nor do I wish to tie myself or the Church to any theory of the Book of Jonah; but this I may say, that the theory of Jonah as a parable is a current theory. It is held by many moderate scholars.'[1] Now the Committee did not and could not find fault with any one for saying that this theory of Jonah is 'a current theory.' That is fact, of which there ought to be no gainsaying. And the Committee did not deny or even refer to the fact. But Mr. Smith wishes it to be understood that this is their objection to his treatment of that book. He affirms also that he has said nothing more about it than what he said previously,

[1] P. 19; but 'treated by most critics now as parabolical' (p. 20).

that is, in the article 'Bible.' If so, he might have cause to complain. But he has actually said more, and so said it that the consequences of his farther advance are such as attach heavy responsibility to him. Perhaps he has forgotten what he then said. Here are the two passages :—

Art. *Bible.*

In the Book of Job we find poetical invention of incidents, attached for didactic purposes to a name apparently derived from old tradition. There is no valid *a priori* reason for denying that the Old Testament may contain other examples of the same art. The Book of Jonah is generally viewed as a case in point.—P. 639 *b*.

Art. *Hebrew Literature.*

The other writings of the last age are on the whole much inferior. . . . Along with this came the beginnings of Haggada,[1] the formation of parables and tales attached to historical names, of which the Book of Jonah is generally taken as an early example.—P. 599 *b*.

In the Speech, the theory is called 'a current theory;' in both Articles it is spoken of as the generally-received theory. When a difference so great is treated as nothing, the Committee assailed have some ground to complain. But the article 'Hebrew Literature' shows a decided advance on the article 'Bible.' In the latter not a word is said about the time when the book was written; in the former it is distinctly ascribed to the last age of Hebrew Literature, which is said to have begun after the return from Babylon. And yet Mr. Smith affirms that he has 'said nothing more than before.'[2] And this is an important advance.

Of the several reasons alleged in the Speech for regarding the book as a parable, he gives only one; but for it he declines responsibility. There is therefore no call to examine it here. But there are two arguments used that need to be looked at, because for these he is responsible: 'Thus he was overtaken by the judgment of God, and was swallowed by the great fish. Throughout the whole of the Old Testament, the figure of the leviathan or great fish is the usual figure for the world-power oppressing the Church [Isa. li. 9, xxvii. 1; Ps. lxxiv. 13, 14].'[3] A confiding reader at once accepts the

[1] The late Emanuel Deutsch will be allowed to be a better expounder of this word: 'The aim of the *Haggadah* being the purely momentary one of elevating, comforting, edifying its audience for the time being, *it did not pretend to possess the slightest authority.* As its method was capricious and arbitrary, so its cultivation was open to every one whose heart prompted him. It is saga, tale, gnome, parable, allegory—poetry, in short, of its own most strange kind,' etc. The italics are his.

[2] Jonah is commonly ascribed to about 800 B.C.; Mr. Smith gives a date posterior to 536 B.C.

[3] P. 20.

identity of the great fish of Jonah with leviathan. This is unquestionably the impression conveyed by the words of the Speech, whatever may have been Mr. Smith's meaning. And if the conveying of an impression be a valid argument in Mr. Smith's hands when finding an oversight in the Book of Ezra, it is an equally valid argument in the hands of others when impugning any of his parables. A confiding reader also accepts the accuracy of the references given. But it would be wise to look for himself first. The great fish in Jonah is called 'a great fish,' but never 'leviathan.' Mr. Smith had not a shadow of reason from the book for even seeming to make the two one. As little reason had he for putting down the references to the use of leviathan in the Old Testament. That word occurs in five (six) places throughout the Old Testament, and only in two of them can it be said to mean the world-power. The word used in Isa. li. 9, Ps. lxxiv. 13, is not *leviathan*, but the more common word *tannin*, while in Jonah the word used is *dag*, the ordinary word for a fish. In two passages leviathan is a name applied to Egypt or Babylon; elsewhere it means a crocodile or some creature similar. But 'throughout the whole of the Old Testament'! And such carelessness is lauded as the highest scholarship! Really, before any speaker flings abroad charges of ignorance and captiousness against others, he might at least make sure that his own pretences to accuracy cannot be impugned; and he might make sure that two passages cannot mean the whole of such a book as the Old Testament.

The one reason given by Mr. Smith for regarding the Book of Jonah as a parable is supported by a second argument of a nature entirely novel. For the reason itself, as we have seen, he declines responsibility; he cannot say the same for the two arguments used. The latter of them is this. The people who lived in Malachi's days —and this fixes the time when Jonah was written—'forgot that it was a condition, or part, of Israel's glorification that she should be a missionary nation to spread God's truth to the ends of the earth.' Hitherto, then, the world, even Kuenen, has been labouring under a complete misapprehension of the destiny of that people. An exclusive, self-contained, haughty race, shut up within its own boundaries of land or creed, with no wish and no call to impart to others the grand truths it was preserving for growth in future ages and in other hands—this is the usual idea of Israel's place among

the nations. Because it may suit Mr. Smith's purpose, as shall presently be shown, to represent Israel as a missionary people forgetful of their high destiny, he ignores this generally-accepted belief. Perhaps it is only one of the absurd traditions which must now be knocked on the head. But we shall not argue in favour of it till he has endeavoured to prove his position.

To the Book of Daniel, Mr. Smith devotes more than a page of the revised Speech. And nowhere does he assail the Committee so blindly and so bitterly. He declares that 'men appointed members of a Committee by the Free Church take the side of Porphyry,' the advocate of the ancient heathen as well as an assailant of the Christian faith, 'and say that if the Book of Daniel is a book of prophecy, it is so not because it speaks of Christ, but because it speaks of events which were past one hundred and sixty years before Christ.' That he was allowed to make these statements without interruption says much for the fairness with which he was treated. There is not a shadow of truth in them, and care was taken in framing the Report that he should not have it in his power to use the argument. Let the facts speak :—

The Speech.	*The Report.*
'In regard to the Book of Daniel, the predictive character of which I am said to have destroyed by saying that it was probably written as late as about 160 B.C.,' etc.	The Book of Daniel is said to have been probably written as late as the national revival under the Maccabees, about 160 B.C., a statement which *tends largely* to destroy its predictive character.
'It is said that if the book belongs to a late date its predictive element is destroyed.'	

Mr. Smith has represented the Report as saying what it does not say. He puts the case absolutely: 'I am said to have destroyed its predictive character,' and, 'Its predictive element is destroyed;' and again: 'The whole predictive value of the book is lost.' This can only be called a programme, or a wish on his part that such had been the inference of the Committee. The Report says that Mr. Smith's view tends to this end, and not a few men would argue that if the prophecies in most of the book be wiped out wholly or almost wholly, those that remain will have a small chance of standing. Porphyry did this. Everything previous to the time of Antiochus, he said, was borrowed from history; the rest was not prediction, but was conjecture or falsehood. Mr. Smith says

this is the position of the Committee. But special care was taken that an argument from the Messianic part of Daniel should not be left to any critic of the Report, for the word *largely* was intentionally added to *tends—tends largely* to destroy its predictive character. Mr. Smith has read the clause as if it were *wholly destroys* its predictive character, and in his Speech he used 'whole' where he ought to have used 'largely'—a freedom nothing can excuse or justify. One would imagine that he considers himself entitled to turn a clause of the Report into anything he pleases. Of course he can easily cover it with ridicule if he be permitted to do this unchecked.

Had the Committee indulged in this freedom with Mr. Smith's words, would language have sufficed to condemn their injustice, their ignorance, and their unfairness? Most certainly not; and the world would have said, Well spoken!

(*b*) Porphyry and the Committee.

By uselessly dragging in the opinions of Porphyry, Mr. Smith has contrived to discredit the character and position of the Committee to a degree, which can only appear incredible to those who have access to ordinary books of reference. 'At that time [the time of Jerome],' he said, 'the fathers of the Church held that the Book of Daniel was prophetic, because, like all the prophecies, it prophesied of Christ; and the opposite view was taken by the heathen philosopher Porphyry: but we now find men appointed members of a Committee in the Free Church, who take the side of Porphyry, and say that if the Book of Daniel is a book of prophecy, it is so not because it speaks of Christ, but because it speaks of events which were past one hundred and sixty years before Christ.' These are most serious statements to make—so serious that nothing more is required than to put side by side the words of the Committee and the sentiments of Porphyry.

The Committee.	*Porphyry.*
The Book of Daniel is said to have been probably written as late as the national revival under the Maccabees, about 160 B.C., a statement which tends largely to destroy its predictive character.	Whatever the author of the Book of Daniel has said previous to the time of Antiochus contains true history; if, however, he has conjectured aught more recent, he has lied, because he knew not the future.

Not a vestige of right reason had Mr. Smith for this attack on the Committee, as if they sided with the assailant of Christianity in its early days. But instead of defending them from an assault so unfounded, it will be more to the purpose to direct attention to Mr. Smith's matters of fact. He says, or at least he conveys the impression, that 'in the time of Jerome' this controversy about Daniel was carried on, and that Porphyry was on the opposite side from the fathers of the Church. There is some confusion of thought in his way of writing history, apparently; if not, there is a conveying of confused impressions, and a want of scientific clearness. Porphyry was in his grave in Jerome's time. Porphyry wrote his famous books against the Christians long before heathenism was overthrown in the Roman Empire, about 270 A.D.; while Jerome wrote his commentary on Daniel long after the triumph of Christianity, in 407 A.D. An interval of almost 140 years counts for nothing in the Speech! We saw already that in the same way 140 years counted for nothing in the history before David's time![1] It appears, too, that the fathers of the early Church, like Jerome, 'held that the Book of Daniel was prophetic, because it prophesied of Christ.' To reply to this novel view would be indeed waste of words: but is not the word *only* implied before 'because'?

Porphyry regarded all that the Book of Daniel contained previous to the time of Antiochus as true history. Of course the Committee consider much of that part of the book to be history, and nothing but history; much of it they also consider to be prediction. But while these are certainly the Committee's views, what are Mr. Smith's? He assigns the writing of the book to, probably, 167 B.C. It records events previous to that date, and it professes to give predictions of events between 536 B.C. and that time. Not one word has Mr. Smith let fall of the view he takes of that history and these predictions. He abuses the Committee for siding with a heathen, which they do not do; he wishes it to be thought that he sides with the fathers of the Church. But he says nothing definite and nothing scientific. He probably agrees with Porphyry about the

[1] The eighth century B.C. class of critics have a contempt for arithmetic. Kuenen, who is perhaps their chief, declares, with much arithmetical parade, that the size of David's kingdom was under 500 square miles! (I. 175, E. T.). To be sure, he has but left out the small figures 1 and 0. However, the *one* goes in front, and the *nothing* comes behind, turning 500 into 15,000 square miles!

date of the book: nothing more is known for certain. But the Committee said 'largely' in the Report to prevent misconception. There are 357 verses altogether in the book: upwards of 140 are predictive, and of these about 20 verses refer to Messianic and later times. Clearly, and without cavil, to exclude these 20 verses was the object of inserting 'largely,' as any fair-minded critic would at once have seen and acknowledged.

(*c*) Reason for considering Ruth and Jonah post-exile books.

Mr. Smith has scrupulously abstained from giving any reason for assigning these two books to the period after the return from Babylon. Although his remarks on them occupy more than two pages of the Speech, there is the most cautious avoidance of any attempt to give reasons for this change on the traditional view. They are parables or tales, it seems; but even for considering them so, or for thinking it allowable to consider them so, Mr. Smith gives no reason that he will be bound by. He mentions one of several reasons for the Book of Jonah, but even for that one reason he declines to be responsible! It is the Committee who must give reasons for their faith, not he; for, with most charming simplicity, he throws the whole burden of proof off his own shoulders by asking, 'Perhaps Dr. Wilson will endeavour to prove that Ruth was not written in the post-exile period?' (p. 19). He conveys the impression that he has attacked such questions 'with the sweat of his brow;' but if the result be that he will not give reasons for his faith, and when at last he ventures to state but one out of several, will not accept responsibility for even that lonely one—if such be the result, people will fear that he has sweated and toiled in vain.

However, whether Mr. Smith will or will not, he must face a serious entanglement arising from his views of Jonah and Ruth. It is this: at the time he says these two books were written—for that is a settled point with him—a great controversy was raging in the Jewish church. Ezra tells the story at full length (ix., x.), and the prophet Malachi refers to it (ii. 11). Men of all ranks had broken the Mosaic law by intermarrying with the surrounding heathen. Ezra and Nehemiah (x. 28–30) insisted on a reform, carried their point amid great obstacles, and separated the foreign

women from their Jewish husbands. Feeling was very hot in Jerusalem on both sides, as the story shows. If then a tale or parable like Ruth were published in the city at or about that time, how would it be regarded? Moabite women are represented as married to Hebrews of high standing in Bethlehem, and one of them is not only a pattern of every womanly grace, but becomes the ancestor of David, the greatest King of Zion. Another book (Jonah), published at or about the same time, according to Mr. Smith, inculcates kindly feeling towards the heathen, and exhibits some of them as more God-fearing than the prophet Jonah himself. What bearing therefore would these books have on the great and bitter controversy that then raged in Jerusalem? Mr. Smith says he has toiled at these studies with the sweat of his brow. Who cares, if he treats with silence this and other questions which demand from him an answer? Kuenen and his school readily give an answer, the only answer that history can accept as relevant in the case. And it is very singular that, while Mr. Smith seems certain these two books were written in that age, Kuenen thinks it is only *highly probable*. The Scottish critic has no doubt regarding the time the books were written:—the post-exile period. Kuenen is doubtful, for he only thinks the guess highly probable. Of reasons for so thinking, Mr. Smith, however, declines to give any. There are several, he says, but they are kept out of sight. Kuenen is more outspoken on this point; he gives a perfectly intelligible reason. And what is Kuenen's reason? These two books, he practically says, were political pamphlets, written by the Liberal party in Jerusalem to give Ezra, Nehemiah, the prophets, and all their supporters a slap in the face for the narrow bigotry they showed towards the foreign women. This reason is quite intelligible, and would go far to make the two books intelligible if they were parables written in that age. But whatever Mr. Smith's view may be of the reason for the writing of these parables, he must make his theory of the date of the books fit in with this bitter controversy in Jerusalem. It was an extraordinary thing that any prophet should select this, of all times, for writing two parables, with a bearing so sinister on the proceedings of the governors, and so directly inducing to defiance and rebellion. He ran a good chance not of getting his parable inserted in the sacred books of the nation

but of having his beard pulled and his house dismantled, as happened in other cases. Kuenen's position is intelligible, Mr. Smith's is not, and it is not likely that his appeal to Dr. Wilson for help to take him out of the difficulty will receive a response.

3. *Anonymous Broadsides.*

Mr. Smith claims to 'have spoken of Scripture in the language of scholarship,' setting 'statements of facts down in plain language' (p. 8). When therefore he speaks of several short prophecies (Isa. xiii., xiv.) as 'anonymous broadsides,' he justifies the phrase against the Committee on what may be a scholarly and an intelligible ground. 'On the other hand,' he says, 'when the people came to Babylon, God still sent them preachers; but how could these prophets get up in the market-place under the eyes of the Babylonian police, and there preach a sermon that Babylon was to be destroyed? We know what would have happened.' And the upshot of this was, that prophets, 'instead of waiting till they had a large book, put a single individual short prophecy upon parchment, upon a broadside—that is, upon a single open sheet of parchment—and sent it through among the people in order that in that way they might have the word of God. That statement may be right or not, *but it is not irreverent*' (p. 10). Is it a scholarly statement? Is it a statement of facts? When those who refuse to recognise in any man the gift of predicting the future, read prophecies of Babylon's overthrow ages before it happened, they say that these so-called predictions must have been written after the events. The name of the prophet, as in Isa. xiii., xiv., was added by the forger, or whatever he may have been, to give weight to his fables. This is quite intelligible from the standing-ground of these writers. But Mr. Smith does not belong to their ranks. He may accept results approaching somewhat closely to the results accepted by them, but he arrives at these results by a different process. Are the steps he takes consistent with the reverence he professes to the Book, or with 'the language of scholarship'?

Has he any ground in scholarship for regarding Isa. xiii., xiv., and Jer. l., li., as anonymous sheets, written, not when Scripture says they were written, but fifty or two hundred years afterwards? He

must make both prophecies anonymous, for the latter (in Jeremiah) shows numerous and unmistakeable traces of borrowing from the former (in Isaiah). Even an English reader can have no difficulty in determining which of the two is the earlier, and which the later. If, then, that in Jeremiah be accepted as a sheet which was written before the fall of Jerusalem, that in Isaiah must be considerably older. It seems this can on no account be allowed. But why? Simply because Isaiah predicts what some critics think he could not have predicted.[1] 'This is the true account of the origin of the criticism upon Isaiah. It was in the swaddling-clothes of rationalism that it attained its maturity. Its first attempts were very juvenile. The names of its founders have been almost forgotten. It was Gesenius, Hitzig, and Ewald who first raised it to the eminence of a science.'[2]

But see how grotesque the whole thing is. First, Mr. Smith claims the right of thrusting out of the Book a whole verse: 'The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah, the son of Amoz, did see.' He has no authority whatever for this right of censorship, except that the verse is destructive of some theory he and others maintain. It stands in their road; therefore it must be done away with. If it be a reverent proceeding to take as much or as little of a passage as suits a man's own view of its origin, then there is no irreverence here. However, it is not enough to strike out this heading. You must strike out the same, or almost the same heading at the very beginning of the whole Book of Isaiah. Critical science will thus soon saw through the branch of the tree it is sitting on.

But, second, Mr. Smith affirms that the prophets sent single sheets of parchment abroad among the people, without adding their names, at least when they foretold the ruin of Babylon. Well, how does he know? He cannot appeal to Isa. xiii. or to Jer. l., for both these prophets have fully signed their prophecies against her. They refuse to countenance his theory. He maintains his position by proposing to thrust their names out of those parts of their own books! Verily, you may prove anything if this procedure be allowable. And it is certainly not a reverent procedure towards the famous dead.

But, third, had any prophets in Babylonia dared to sign their

[1] Line 5, Speech, p. 23, iv., has nothing like it in the Report. There *was* something very like it in the Private and Confidential Proof.

[2] Delitzsch, I. 58.

names to predictions uttered against that country, they would have at once fallen into the hands of 'the Babylonian police.' This is as odd an argument as a man could use, for neither Isaiah nor Jeremiah preached in a Babylonian market-place. The argument seems to be, Suppose they did; what then? Well, there is nothing irreverent in saying, He that fights and runs away, may live to fight another day; but it partakes very much of the ludicrous. 'The Babylonian police!' Not one fact has Mr. Smith to produce in support of this strange idea. All the facts of history prove that when a prophet got a message from God, he felt bound to deliver it, whatever the cost to himself might be. Of shrinking from duty he dared not think. Whether he had to discharge that duty in a king's palace and to a king's face, or in a public square amid an angry crowd, made no difference to the prophet. If he quailed under a king's frown or a people's anger, the fate of Urijah warned him what the greatest of all Kings would do. And he knew, also, that a lion might meet him by the way as the messenger of vengeance, if he dared to infringe his orders in the least; or the sore strokes of conscience might teach him as they taught Elijah; or the winds might stay his flight as they did Jonah's; or those who ran when they were not sent might be 'roasted in the fire,' as were Ahab and Zedekiah. But, 'the police'! Did Micaiah care for the police of Samaria? Nay, truly, but they cared for him. Was Jonah afraid of the police magistrates of Nineveh? Be the story of his preaching a parable or a fact, it makes no difference in this respect; for he inspired court and people with such terror, that 'word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes!' Did Micah or Jeremiah care for the police of Jerusalem? Or did Daniel care for the police, when, in the presence of Babylonian emperors, he told one of them that his kingdom would pass away and his reason fail? and when he announced to another, before his drunken courtiers, that ruin would overtake them all that very night? These are notorious facts: Mr. Smith's prophetic fear of the police is worse than ludicrous; it is a wrong done to the great men of olden times, and a singular lack of reverence for the message they delivered. All thoughts of police and police magistrates may be dismissed as unworthy of the subject.

4. *Eber.*

The dispute about Eber is probably of less importance than the matters already considered. But Mr. Smith rests his case, as usual, on a statement which cannot be examined without shaking all confidence in his capacity to judge. 'In Gen. x.,' he says, 'Eber is the descendant of Arphaxad, and Aram or Syria is Arphaxad's brother, and the ancestor not of the Hebrews but of Uz and others. But in Deut. xxvi. 5 the Hebrew, in his confession before the altar, is directed to say that his ancestor was a nomad Aramæan; and again, in Gen. xxii. 21, Uz and Aram are both descendants of Eber through Nahor, and Uz is Aram's uncle instead of his son. If we find, then, that Eber, Uz, or Aram had one father in one part of the Pentateuch, and another father in another part of the Pentateuch, we are not to suppose that an actual historical man had two fathers—(laughter)—but that the authors of Scripture, who were wise as well as inspired authors, meant something which was sense, and was consistent with the actual facts of the case. (Laughter and applause.)' Probably the laughter caused by these sentiments was not laughter at the wit, but laughter at the blindness shown. Mr. Smith makes these three references to Aram come from three different authors, though they are all found in the Pentateuch. Quote a fourth author, 1 Chron. vii. 14, 34. We shall then find that Aram was a descendant of one of Jacob's sons, and that the Aramitess, corresponding to the Aramæan (Deut. xxvi. 5), was the mother of Machir, Manasseh's son. If the rule be laid down, that whenever the same name occurs in a book of history, the same man is always referred to, we may close the book and cease to read. Obadiah is so common a name in the Old Testament, that at least a dozen men in different ages are known to have been so called. Mr. Smith's rule regarding Aram requires us to confound these dozen men as one and the same! Different men bearing the same name readily occur to ordinary minds as an easy explanation of difficulties. Mr. Smith does not recognise this simple rule in the case of Aram. And probably it was his manifest want of this ordinary perception which caused the laughter.

In summing up this review of the Speech, it will conduce to a

clearer understanding of its merits, if there be brought together in brief compass part of the evidence, which has been advanced in the preceding pages for withholding confidence from the statements it contains.

First, under the general heading of Misrepresentations, or inaccurate statements of the point in dispute, it is shown that ordinary care has not been taken to do justice to the Report, on at least eight main particulars, without reckoning errors of less consequence. Most of these particulars are grave misstatments of easily-ascertained facts. Some people may think all of them equally grave. Generous minds consider a single misstatement of another's position an injustice or a blunder that must be rectified at once. But here are at least eight in sixteen pages; and reasoning from these eight, Mr. Smith both claims the sympathy of all men under what he considers unfair treatment, and holds up the Committee to the scorn of the world as ignorant opponents of learning and truth. Now, the unfair treatment has been suffered by the Committee, not by him; and the interests of sound learning are safer in their hands than in his. Condemning his rash handling of Daniel's prophecies, the Committee said that it tends largely to destroy their predictive character, which Mr. Smith represents as equal to 'the whole predictive value of the book is lost.' When the Committee refer to a well-known 'narrative,' written by a series of writers, according to Mr. Smith, a century or two after David, he denounces them as 'grossly unfair;' he charges them with representing him as denying that 'there was any writer before David,' a sentiment as unlike the reference made by them as can be. And when the Committee say that a prophecy, consisting of two chapters in our version, if not two and a half in the Greek, is signed four times by its author, Jeremiah, he says that because the heading of one chapter is wanting in the Greek, therefore the writer is anonymous! Referring to pieces of thorough blundering in the Book of Ezra (if his article on Haggai is to be relied on), he says that the Committee found fault with him for the harmless doctrine that there 'was a little transposition of some of the sources.' And when the Committee speak of the predictive element in Scripture, he quietly assumes that they are speaking of prophecy, or preaching in its wider meaning, and expresses his amazement at the ignorance of

men, who could not distinguish the rabbinical division of *The Law* from *The Prophets*. These are a few of the particulars in which Mr. Smith has grievously misrepresented the Committee's position. His friends cannot imagine that this is no wrong done. He himself ought to remember that in the realms of scholarship, precisely as in the world at large, neither of two opposing parties counts it honourable to misrepresent the other.

Under the second general heading of Wrongful Evidence in his own favour, got from inaccurate citing of witnesses, falls a mass of proof which bears out the Committee's views and condemns Mr. Smith's. Questions of criticism are treated by him with an incredible lightness, as if the books or the authors cited had never been really examined. There are many instances of this. Keil, for example, is called in to prove that Mr. Smith is right, when his evidence is that Mr. Smith is wrong. To be sure, both of them take the same view of a difficulty which was never spoken of in Committee; while on the real point in dispute between the Committee and Mr. Smith, he sides with the former and condemns the latter. Porphyry, too, is cited as friendly to the Committee; but if he is friendly to either side, it is to Mr. Smith. Because *leviathan* is found in two passages as a symbol of world-power, therefore it has that meaning 'throughout the whole of the Old Testament'! And because some writers regard with suspicion the last few verses of Mark's Gospel, therefore 'the most orthodox scholars' take this view! The Septuagint is quoted; but on turning to the passage, the evidence relied on is not there, and can only be got by putting into the text what you want to take out of it—a performance which Mr. Smith has the modesty not to attempt in print. Next, the words of the Greek are translated; but Mr. Smith's translation is so novel, and his changes on the original so alarming, that a critic will leave his readers to form their own judgment of the rendering. It is useless to refer to more witnesses, who, though cited by Mr. Smith in his own favour, refuse when cross-examined to speak for him, but give evidence for the Committee. Ten at least of the witnesses are in this position: there are really more.

Under a third general heading comes the most singular of all evidence, Mr. Smith against himself and against Professor Lindsay. Twice he has been found contradicting himself; once, indeed, when

he denounced the view of the Committee as 'grossly unfair.' Once, too, he claims that he was acquitted upon the views regarding The Song which he has now advanced; and Professor Lindsay even goes so far as to say that 'every statement' about it in *Hebrew Literature* 'had been already made in Canticles.' It requires great faith in the ignorance of other men to make statements so free from fact! But the two professors do not always agree; and of Mr. Smith's contradiction of Professor Lindsay, it may be said that when Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war.

Had the score of principal errors which we have culled from these sixteen pages of the Speech arisen from the Report having been put into Mr. Smith's hands an hour or two before he began to speak, there would have been excuse for the speaker. Every one would have made most generous allowance for rashness of statement and inaccuracy of reading. But the Speech was carefully revised and published more than a fortnight after it was delivered. There is, therefore, no excuse for errors and misstatements which ordinary care could not have failed to discover. But even for the Speech as spoken there is little excuse. Most of page 15 of the Speech seems an attempt on Mr. Smith's part to reply to what was said in the Committee two days before. As Professor Lindsay allows he kept his friend informed of what took place in Committee, it is probable that that page was one result of this. But it was not the only result; for the Speech largely follows the Reasons of Dissent given in by Professor Lindsay on Monday, 25th October. These Reasons must have been written two or three full days before the Commission met on 27th October. Without taking any side on the propriety or impropriety of not formally communicating the Report to Mr. Smith before that morning, we may say that few men will be disposed to blame his friends for any information they may have given him.

It is now four years since the struggle began which was caused by the critical papers in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Of the efforts at first made to persuade the world that learning and a demand for reasonable freedom were arrayed on one side, while only ignorance and a bigoted opposition to all change could be found on the other, it is needless to speak. All that nonsense is a thing of the past. It may be said also that the field over which the struggle

ranges has greatly widened. But no one can believe that what was then indistinct in the new views is a whit clearer to-day; or what was indefinite is more plain; or what was called the probable is now certain. For four years, 'probable' and 'appears' have figured as chief factors in this game of war. No certainty has been reached by the advocates for change. Has even one addition been made to our stock of knowledge? Or has a single fact been put in a new or a better light? Truly, had these years and efforts been spent even in collating manuscripts, how different might have been the result! And with what pride would a grateful country have sounded the praises of her sons, who had the leisure and the ability for that department of scholarly research. Has there not rather been a purposeless calling in question of surely believed things, without a real basis in science for the doubts expressed? And can any one say that aught has been advanced on Mr. Smith's side to exalt the greatness of that grand Old Book, which has held its place unmoved amid the countless storms of scores of ages? But the one result of this four years' battle appears to be (for even here there is not certainty), a theory of inspiration, which is implied rather than clearly stated, but of which it may be said that the boldness of the man who will pin his faith to it is more worthy of admiration than his science.

NOTE.

As the authority given by Mr. Smith for the Book of Jashar (1 Kings viii. 53) is Wellhausen in Bleek's *Introduction*, 4th ed. 1878, it is perfectly fair to assume that the authority is the same for his translation of the passage in dispute. Should this turn out to be a mistake, the responsibility rests on Mr. Smith himself. The case then stands thus:—Bagster's translation (above, p. 18) is from the Greek, and is authenticated by existing manuscripts fourteen or fifteen centuries old. Mr. Smith's rendering, on the same page, is from the German; is not according to the Septuagint; is in one essential part called only 'more probable,' even by its first narrator; and dates no further back than 1878 A.D. Or, if it is not from the German, it is from Hebrew composed by Wellhausen three years since, as a specimen of what he conjectured was written in Jerusalem perhaps 2000 years before. His imaginary Hebrew is of no more value than if it had been, what it greatly resembles, the College exercise of an intelligent student. And yet the Commission of Assembly were led to understand that Mr. Smith was quoting a book which had been written during or shortly after Solomon's reign, and of which a fragment had been preserved in the real Septuagint as it was first published 2000 years ago! He was actually quoting an imaginary passage manufactured by Wellhausen in 1878! That any one should cite a witness so unreliable is indeed very singular; but not more so than that he should cite our Lord as 'always speaking of the Law and the Prophets as two distinct things,' when he might easily have found, even by consulting Alford on the passages referred to at the foot of page 9, that it is not the fact.

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